

## **CHAPTER II**

### **GENERAL PICTURE OF GOLDEN RIVER RESTAURANT**

#### **II.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE COMPANY**

In 1960, the father of the restaurant's owner now, came to the Netherlands in order to find a new business opportunity and to gain fortune since there was no longer possibility to build business in his own country, Hong Kong. The first place where he arrived in The Netherlands is Amsterdam. And during an eight-year time, he tried to build a restaurant business. In 1968, He successfully had a lot of restaurants. These restaurants were spread in some cities in Holland but they did not have the same name from one to another.

Since he was a Chinese gentleman who had already held a family business tradition, each restaurant was given to the other people who still had family relationship and came a few years later after him to go to the Netherlands. One of the restaurants was situated in Laren City and it was named Blue Lotus Restaurant. Until 1975, it was only Blue Lotus Restaurant in Laren that still existed whereas the other restaurants were closed down. In the same year, Blue Lotus Restaurant became a C.V (Commanditair Vennootschap) whereas Hemmy Wong (The restaurant's owner now) became the passive C.V. He only invested some money in the business but he did not run the business.

In 1977, Blue Lotus was sold to Hemmy's elder sister. But then in 1986, because of certain problem Blue Lotus Restaurant was bought again and handed over to Hemmy Wong. But now, he has all the shares, he runs the business, and this restaurant totally belongs to him. Since Blue Lotus was handed over to Hemmy Wong, the name was changed into Golden River Restaurant but it is still situated at Stationsweg 1, 1251 KC Laren city until now.

## **II.2. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE BRAND IMAGE OF GOLDEN RIVER**

In the early years the name of Blue Lotus in Laren was taken from the name of a famous Chinese restaurant in Eindhoven and Zeist. Those restaurants were very busy, and all people in the Netherlands came to eat there. Hopefully by choosing the same name with those restaurants could bring some effects to open a new restaurant in people's views. It worked, but only for several early years. Since the restaurant was not well managed, it could not keep the costumers. People who had already come to Blue Lotus did not satisfy and did not come back. Blue Lotus had a bad image in the society.

Since Hemmy took over it in 1986, he tried to change the overall image of the restaurant. First he changed the name of the restaurant because when people heard Blue Lotus they would automatically think of a less qualified Chinese restaurant. As a Chinese who still holds the Chinese

tradition Hemmy and his father ask an old Chinese gentleman that they considered to be a wise man some suggestion. The men chose “Golden River” and made a poem of it, that has recently been hung in the restaurant. Chinese people believe that a river always flows and this refer to money that will always come. It is expected that this name will bring fortune. But Hemmy realizes that the name is not the only one that makes the restaurant exist. The important thing is how to keep the guests still believe that his restaurant can satisfy the guests because of the money they spend.

The next effort done by Hemmy Wong was improving the exterior and interior of the restaurant. The exterior and interior of the restaurant had been redesigned with the corporation between Hemmy Wong’s father (opa) and a Chinese interior designer that worked in Taiwan’s interior company. The previous interior that was filthy and lack of maintenance has been changed into luxury Chinese restaurant. Besides the luxury of the restaurant, it still has warmth and friendliness. The restaurant is suitable for businessman and even a family with children because it has spacious space to walk around the restaurant so the children also has a lot of interesting spot to look if they are bored to sit in the chair, like the aquarium in the west corner (the back side of the restaurant) that is filled with variety of fish or the big fish in the bridge. Hemmy wants to treat his guest with the Chinese cuisine and Chinese surrounding as much as he can so the guest will feel the ultimate comfort and satisfaction of the Chinese cuisine and the atmosphere. As time goes by, he has coincidentally added some private collection like Chinese

vase, paintings, chairs etc to support the atmosphere. He has also changed the restaurant chinaware, adjusted to the new atmosphere. In choosing the chinaware, he does not mind to spend more money as long as the quality of the chinaware is good, especially it does not easily crack like the first chinaware that had been used by Golden River restaurant in the beginning of its operation.

The next effort done by Hemmy Wong was joining the FER (Fine Eastern Restaurant) organization which was established in 1984. In the early years in the Netherlands, all Chinese restaurants served almost the same food such as “tjap tjoi, roasted pork, fu yung hai”. FER has tried to make evolution of Chinese food in the Netherlands. Each restaurant should have its own specialty that can be relied on. The menu becomes more complex, not only food from pork, chicken, beef, vegetable, and egg but also seafood, fish, and duck. The presentation of food has also been improved. The presentation of the food is very well modified as an eye catcher, such as garnishing by using firework at the duck, the use of dry ice in dessert, hot plate with its smoke, etc. The way the food delivered is also improved, using rechaud to keep it warm.

One of the FER members at that moment Budha restaurant in Hilversum, is very famous and all people in the Netherlands talk about it. Because of this FER has a very good image, which also brings effects to all off its members. People would come to try the food and service of the restaurants, and they often become full house. After several months joining

the FER, Hemmy was asked to be the secretary of FER, because he was considered to be a qualified person, who can speak English, Dutch, and Cantonese fluently.

FER had done many activities that most of them were reported in the Newspaper Journal. The name of Golden River had arisen rapidly from those moments, the restaurant became very busy and a lot of new restaurants were established in another town in the Netherlands copying the name of Golden River. But it only last for a few years. If the restaurants could not do well and keep their costumers, the name become useless, like what had been done by Blue Lotus before. Hemmy realizes that the name can be useful only if it is well managed by keeping the costumer satisfaction with what they have spent in the restaurant. He tries to create a luxury and friendly Chinese image which welcome families to eat. This can be seen from the menu made for families that provides the children menu. Hemmy also tries to impress the guest as much as possible with the unique presentation of the food, and the way of service.

Hemmy also does many things to build and support the image of the restaurant, such as sponsorship for football club, volleyball club, music orchestra, and other society. This is done not just for a charity but also in order to keep them happy. They are also part of society in Laren or some cities around which are also the guests of Golden River.

Golden River also holds several events and parties that invite their guests such as charity for Bali that raised 30000US\$, 10<sup>th</sup>, 12.5<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Golden River, party cruise night, Christmas day. Golden River also does many big catering in several cities in the Netherlands and even in Belgium. These activities are known by Golden River guests and have roles in building the images of Golden River. Some of the guests are impressed and respect Golden River because they found that it is not easy to achieve those for a restaurant in a small city like Laren “Why does Hongkong-Belgium association ask Golden River from Laren to cook in Brussels?”.

Recently Hemmy is quite satisfied with the image that has already own by Golden River, and will keep this condition. In the future, Hemmy will try to retain the loyal guest of Golden River and still try to gain new costumers.

### **II.3. HISTORY OF RECRUITING PETRA HOTEL MANAGEMNT STUDENT AS TRAINEES IN GOLDEN RIVER**

In the beginning, the program of recruiting Indonesia students as trainees in restaurants was done by SIR (Selected Indonesian Restaurant), which cooperates with CHN (Christelijke Hogeschool Nederland). After several years, it was followed by FER which also has some corporation with SIR. Golden River recruited its first trainees in 1999 from Trisakti

University, Jakarta-Indonesia. In the following year until now, Golden River has been recruiting trainees from Petra University, Surabaya-Indonesia.

This program is done by Golden River because according to Hemmy Wong, he wants to give opportunity to the students to learn in his restaurant and learn about Dutch culture. In addition to this, he says that the existence of the students will obviously give less pressure to the Golden River staffs in their works. Trainees can help them do the daily operation in restaurant. The staffs of Golden River that mostly are Hemmy's family will find new atmosphere every year. They will face and interact with various students that have different culture from them.

Related with the image of Golden River, Hemmy takes the trainees as one of his public relation. He tells his guests frequently about his activities of going to Indonesia to recruit the students. He also introduces the students to his guests and friends, and let the students interact and tell their life, study and culture. Almost all the return guests have known that Golden River always take student from Indonesia every year. The students have become parts of Golden River itself in its daily operation to serve the guests. The guests consider the program of recruiting the students from Indonesia which is done by Golden River is a brilliant and noble idea because Hemmy gives the students from Indonesia – the developing country that has faced many social, economic, and polotical problems - chances to study in CHN Leeuwarden and do the internship in his restaurant. This makes the image of Hemmy and even Golden River as a caring restaurant.

#### **II.4. TARGET MARKET OF GOLDEN RIVER RESTAURANT**

The owner of the restaurant does not specialize the target on certain people. The guest can be young, middle age or old, businessman or families, and local or international people. Since the owner has tried to implement Chinese luxury image in the restaurant and provided expensive food such as Garlic Prawn, Peking duck, and also Lobster that are obviously very expensive, it can be said that most of the costumers must be middle to top class society. But on the other hand Golden River still provides and sells food for middle and low class society. From the take away, the restaurant does not provide any service to serve the food and also set lower price for the food.

As we know there are many aspects that influence people to choose a restaurant as a place to have a meal. Mostly the low class people just concern about the food. They usually prefer a restaurant that can serve good food that meet their price level. They usually just come to the restaurant in order to have meals. The middle class people start to consider having another aspect while eating in the restaurant such as good service and nice atmosphere. So they can enjoy their meal more apart from focusing on the food. But the most important thing for them is still the food. For these two classes people, Golden River still provides take away service, which does not provide any service to serve the food and set the price lower. On the other hand, the high class people are more aware of the other needs apart



from just good food. They concern more on fulfilling their physiological needs. They usually don't mind to spend more money just to have the other aspect of dining which is to have unusual experience that is being visualized as unique atmospheres and good service.

Based on those facts above, the owner of Golden River restaurant seems to provide the restaurant that does not just serve good food but also good service and a good atmosphere, so the guests can get a real dining experience. The basic consideration why Golden River restaurant tries to provide not just good food but also good service and good atmosphere is because of the location of the restaurant itself. As we know Golden River restaurant is located in Laren, where most of the people in this city are dominated by high class people. So it is not surprising that Golden River restaurant can be considered as an expensive restaurant because it does not just provide main needs but also the intangible needs and it also tries to fit in the location of the restaurant itself.

The guests that come to Golden River restaurant do not mind about coming to Golden River restaurant even though Golden River has reputation on setting a high price. It is because they know what kind of dining experience that they can get in Golden River restaurant.